Feb. 7, 1956 K. L. ROBERTS 2,733,716

FORCEPS FOR EAR-PIERCING

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FIG. 1

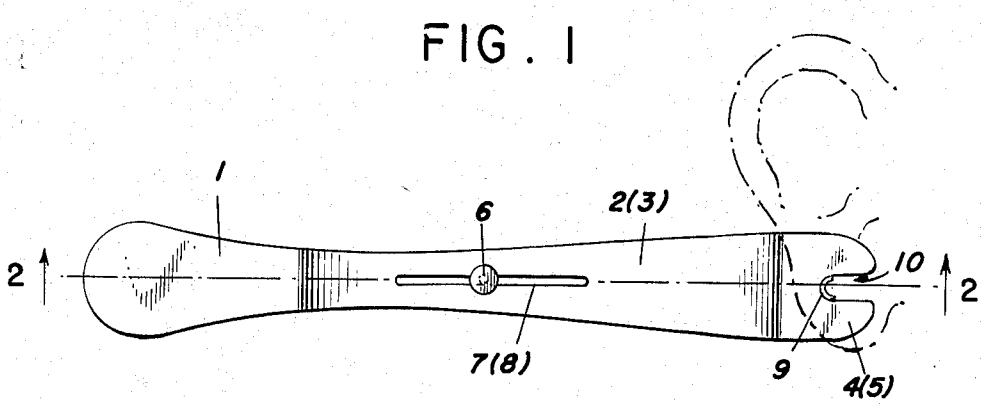


FIG. 2

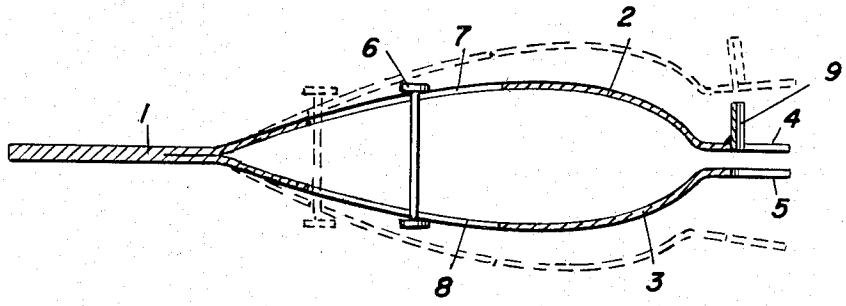


FIG. 3

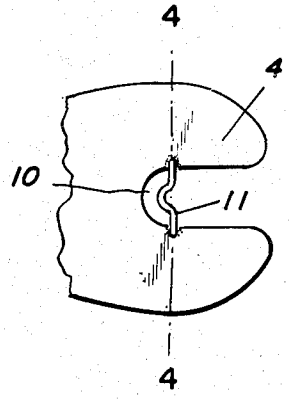
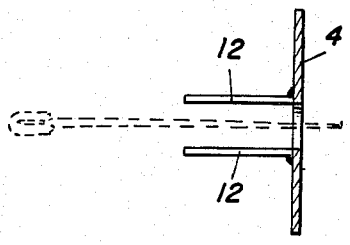


FIG. 4



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FORCEPS FOR EAR-PIERCING

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5 Claims. (Cl. 128—321)

This invention is concerned with special forceps to hold the lobe of an ear so it can be pierced in exactly the desired position and direction for wearing ear rings.

It is well-known that many types of ear rings require pierced ears to satisfy the ideas of fashion of the wearer. It is not so well appreciated that, to satisfy the fastidious, the ears must be pierced properly. The problem is not simply one of piercing the lobes. The openings made should pass through the ears in a given direction so that certain types of ornaments will not lose what fashion considers to be proper symmetry. Also, each opening should be circular, not drawn out of shape, so the ornament will not sag.

Where such dictates of fashion are important, the burden is quite severe for the person who is to pierce the ear lobe neatly and exactly. The mere hand and eye of the operator alone are not sufficiently sure to satisfy the fashion-conscious critic. To aid in this situation, the mechanical instrument of the present invention functions to considerable advantage.

The present instrument involves recognition that the lobe of an ear is appreciably thick, so that opportunity exists for a piercing needle to point out of line as it is forced through from one side to the other. The resulting opening then might carry an ear ornament out of the artistic line sought by the wearer. Not only is the lobe thick in some degree but the skin on each side is free to move, each side independently of the other. If the skin on either side shifts from its normal position during piercing, the opening when pierced may extend out of line when the skin on both sides reassume their normal relative positions. Thus, piercing an ear lobe is more difficult, on analysis, than one would suppose. But when piercing both lobes further difficulty appears. Both lobes must be pierced at exact points and in exact directions symmetrical with each other.

The present invention deals with means both to hold and to facilitate alignment as an ear lobe is pierced.

Various benefits of this patricular improvement are obtained in a forceps arranged to hold the ear lobe firmly at many points while aligning certain guide points in open view. Thus, the operator is directed to see the exact spot and the exact direction for piercing.

This invention is described with particular reference to the accompanying drawings of illustrative embodiments. The invention is further pointed out in the accompanying claims.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 shows, in plan, forceps to hold an ear lobe, having broad tips containing a recess to expose part of the lobe and containing a needle guide of such open structure that both the exact point and the exact direction of piercing are aligned and visible to an operator. In the form shown, both the recess and the guide are open toward the front or tip.

Fig. 2 shows in vertical section the same forceps taken along the line 2—2 of Fig. 1. The forceps in an open position appears in dotted outline.

Fig. 3 shows in plan view a modified forceps tip in which a guide element in form and in position differs from what is shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 shows another modification of open tip in the plane of 4—4 in Fig. 3, in which a guide of separate vertical elements taken with certain open spaces expose both direction and point of application of a piercing needle.

It should be emphasized again that piercing an ear lobe for jewelry is not a matter merely of making a perforation. Today's rule of fashion is critical and the beauty of ear ornaments often depends on symmetry. If, in piercing, the skin on one side of the lobe moves out of normal position to the other side, the perforation is faulty; the jewelry may hang askew. Or, if the exact points for puncture of the lobe cannot be arranged, and then held, exactly, ornaments in the two ears may lose symmetry with each other. In brief, an operator must determine and must continue to watch the exact point of piercing the lobe; he must see the direction and maintain the needle in that direction straight through the lobe; he must continue to hold both sides of a lobe in normal position without letting the skin slide on one side relatively to the skin on the other side. Otherwise, a pair of ornaments may not be adjusted with nicety, or even if they may at first, they may in time pull or enlarge one lobe opening out of balance.

Further description refers for illustration to the particular forms of this invention shown in the drawings.

An ear forceps 1 comprises an upper and a lower leaf 2 and 3 springing from a common handle. These leaves 2 and 3 may be pressed together and held suitably spaced by a link 6 sliding in registered slots 7 and 8 in the leaves. The leaves 2 and 3 terminate in recessed or bifurcated tips 4 and 5. These tips are flat, preferably, so as to hold an ear lobe over an extensive surface and to retain the skin on opposite sides immovable in normal, parallel, flat relationship. This grasping of the lobe affords a base for coaction with the guide elements to be described. The adjustable compression is particularly important with these flat, recessed tips for it avoids compressing the lobe out of normal thickness and normal smoothness. Yet it retains the skin on both sides in firm but normal relationship during piercing.

An important feature of this invention lies in combining with the recessed tips an open type of sight to guide the operator as to both point and direction of the piercing needle.

As shown in Fig. 1 and also in Fig. 3, the rear of the tip bifurcation or recess 10 preferably is semi-circular. Such semi-circular sight has been found an especially useful form to guide the eye to an exact spot; namely, the center of the semi-circle. Other forms will lend some degree of guidance, however. The guide shown in Fig. 1 is a half cylinder 9, open vertically, and of the same order of radius as the rear of the tip. In fact, the half cylinder preferably establishes the curve at the rear of the opening. Also, half cylinder 9 affords vertical elements by which to align a needle for piercing in the proper direction through the point at the center of the semi-circle at the rear of the recess. This is clear more particularly from Fig. 2.

A modified combination sight comprising guide and open tip is shown in Fig. 3. There the rear of the tip recess 10 preferably is semi-circular. A guide 11 contains a smaller semi-circle, concentric with recess 10 and like 10 open toward the front. Guide 11 is constructed of a narrow element, such as a wire, extending from one side of the tip recess to the other. This guide may be located down on the tip or may be elevated from the plane of the upper tip on pins at the sides of the opening.

Such pins or vertical elements serve to increase the accuracy of the guide.

Another modified form of this invention is illustrated in Fig. 4. This is an extremely simple form. The guide in this form is shown as a pair of pins **12** rising vertically from the sides of the recess of upper tip **4**. The guide is entirely clear between pins **12**. The middle between these pins **12** preferably coincides with the center of a semi-circle forming the back of the tip recess **10** where the back is semi-circular, preferably, as in Figs. 1, 2 and 3, to facilitate use of the guide. In this form of Fig. 4 a needle is readily guided to a point halfway between the posts **12** and readily held vertical parallel to the posts. The various guide points align all in open view.

It will be clear that the different forms of this invention contribute to accuracy in piercing an ear lobe. They aid in locating the point to pierce; they aid in directing the needle straight through the ear lobe; and they aid in maintaining the skin in place on both sides during piercing. Also, this structure permits withdrawal of the forceps and yet leaves the needle in the lobe.

The importance of these results, and simplicity of these means cooperating to attain these results, justify emphasis.

It is found that if a needle is directed at an angle through the ear lobe, piercing the skin on one side offset from the other, the ensuing result is quite undesirable. In the first place the ear ornament on one side may well be out of balance with the other side, even at the outset. But this is not all. It develops as an ornament hangs from this out-of-line opening that the weight of even such an ornament, bearing chiefly on the skin on one side of the lobe, gradually pulls the skin or opening down on that side. The hole will become lop-sided. Then certain ornaments are bound to appear unbalanced.

This distorting result may have originated during piercing, with movement of the skin on one side of the lobe relative to the other side. In other cases the skin may not actually slip on one side, but with some types of forceps, too much pressure may puff or stretch the skin on one side more than on the other. Pressure from the forceps should be evenly distributed and should be adaptable to the thickness or type of lobe being pierced. This is all in addition to facilitate holding the needle readily at both the right spot and in the right direction during piercing.

This invention meets these needs. The tips of the forceps are extensively in contact with the skin on both sides of the lobe. Also, the distance apart, or pressure on the skin, is adjustable and adaptable to the particular ear under treatment, as by the spring regulator **6** with broad tips **4**.

The base of skin on both sides of the lobe is maintained in alignment. The forceps tips of this invention are recessed or open from the front and also the guide on the upper tip is open at the front. The guide, moreover, registers in such proximity to the base of the recess as readily to align the point of piercing, or to facilitate such alignment. The vertical guide being open at the front, aligns this point with its vertical elements in full view to direct the needle straight through the lobe. The openness of the guide taken with the curvature of the recess bring three-dimensional reference points into view together.

An additional function is served by the open front of the guide and of the forceps tips. This openness permits

the forceps to be drawn back from the needle after piercing. Thus, the needle is left in exactly the position obtained by the piercing. In many cases this leaving of the needle in the lobe is useful; for example, where this opening permits drawing a thread or other device through the new opening at exactly the desired point and exactly the desired direction. This provides means of setting the new opening at this exact point and direction during the healing process.

In accordance with the patent statutes, this invention is described with reference to specific embodiments, as contemplated at present to be best; but it will now be evident to those skilled in the art that variations and changes may be made within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. Forceps to hold an ear lobe during piercing for ear ornaments, the forceps comprising a pair of tips each bifurcated form the front to contain an open recess, the upper tip containing guide elements extending up at right angles therefrom at the sides of the recess and open at the front, to align guide points in open view for directing a piercing needle straight through a given point of an ear lobe.

2. Forceps to hold an ear lobe during piercing for ear ornaments, the forceps comprising a pair of tips each broad and each bifurcated from the front to form an open recess, and means to adjust pressure between the tips, for holding the skin on both sides in smooth, relatively immovable relationship across the open recess, the upper tip containing guide elements extending up at right angles therefrom at the sides of the recess and open at the front, to align guide points in open view for directing a piercing needle straight through opposite points of an ear lobe.

3. Forceps to hold an ear lobe during piercing for ear ornaments, the forceps comprising a pair of tips each bifurcated from the front to contain an open recess, the rear of the upper recess being semi-circular; and a semi-circular guide supported above and concentric with the semi-circular recess, to align the centers as guide points in open view for directing a piercing needle straight through a given point of an ear lobe.

4. Forceps to hold an ear lobe during piercing for ear ornaments, the forceps comprising a pair of tips each bifurcated from the front to contain an open recess, the rear of the upper recess being defined by a semi-cylinder rising therefrom, to align central points thereof as guide points in open view for directing a piercing needle straight through a given point of an ear lobe.

5. Forceps to hold an ear lobe during piercing for ear ornaments, the forceps comprising a pair of tips each bifurcated from the front to form an open recess, the upper tip comprising guide means rising therefrom and terminating in guide points in open view from the front of the recess to direct a piercing needle through a given point of an ear lobe, the recesses permitting withdrawal of the forceps from the lobe while a piercing needle is left in the lobe.

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